

would like to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, for introducing the health care provisions in the Millennium Health Care Act, as well as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), the subcommittee's ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, as always the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) the ranking member of the full committee, has worked in the committee's traditional bipartisan fashion on this important legislation. I thank the gentleman for his effort and for his efforts on all the legislation that we have had this year.

The House and Senate VA committees came to this agreement over the past week, and I want to express my appreciation to both Senators SPECTER and ROCKEFELLER, the chairman and ranking member of the VA committee on the Senate side, for their cooperative spirit in which they approach all issues considered in conference.

The staff of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Senate VA committee should be commended for their cooperation demonstrated during our final legislative deliberations of this year. One particular staff member needs to be singled out and I would like to pay tribute to Jill T. Cochran on the occasion of her retirement. Jill leaves after 25 years of service, and we commend her for her service to the House on behalf of our Nation's veterans. We wish Jill all the very best.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act of 1999 Conference Report. Included in this Conference Report is my bill H.R. 430, the Combat Veterans Medical Equity Act. Due to the broad base of support, my bill gained 177 cosponsors and was endorsed by the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Catholic War Veterans, The Non Commissioned Officers Association of the United States of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Legion of Valor, American Veterans Committee and the Jewish War Veterans.

Most people are unaware that under current law, combat wounded veterans do not always qualify for medical care at VA facilities. This bill will change the law to ensure combat wounded veterans receive automatic access to treatment at VA facilities.

It sets the enrollment priority for combat injured veterans for medical service at level three—the same level as former Prisoner of Wars and veterans with service connected disabilities rated between 10 and 20 percent.

We as a nation owe a debt of gratitude to all our veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart for injuries suffered in service to our country. I would like to thank Chairman STUMP and Chairman SPECTER for including my legislation, the Combat Veterans Medical Equity Act, in this important legislation. I would also like to congratulate the Military Order of the Purple Heart for their hard work and advocacy on behalf of our nations combat wounded veterans.

The Veterans Millennium Health Care Act of 1999 is long overdue. I am proud to support this bill for our nation's veterans and I urge a yes vote.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the conference report on H.R. 2116, the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act of 1999, is important legislation designed to lay the ground work for veterans health care into the next century.

Overall, I support many of the provisions of H.R. 2116 that provide needed modifications to the VA health care system, and I will vote for the bill. However, I do have serious concerns about one element of the bill which will unfairly delay funding for a proposed nursing home facility that is desperately needed to serve veterans in southern Ohio. I say unfairly because under current law, the proposed facility in Georgetown, Ohio is well on track to receive final approval by VA for FY 2000 funds to pay the federal share of the project. The problem is that all parties involved—the VA, the State of Ohio, local government officials, and concerned veterans groups—have acted in good faith and followed the rules under the application process. Unfortunately, H.R. 2116 changes those rules in the middle of the game, preventing Georgetown from receiving the federal funds in FY 2000 as planned.

Ohio has a serious shortfall of more than 4,000 VA nursing home beds. In fact, the only VA nursing home serving Ohio is in Sandusky—a 4 or 5 hour drive from southern Ohio—and 160 veterans are on the waiting list. Since only 8 of the home's 650 residents are from southern Ohio, it is clear why the Georgetown facility is vital to the veterans in our part of the state.

The State of Ohio recognizes the urgency of this situation and has committed \$4.5 million for its share of the construction money in Ohio's FY 2000 budget. The state has also committed \$500,000 for various administrative expenses to see the project to completion for a total of \$5 million in state funds. I want to add that Brown County has spent \$186,000 of its own funds for land acquisition, an environmental impact study and for other expenses, so there has been a considerable state and local investment in this project. The VA agrees that the Georgetown facility is important to veterans in Ohio, and the Secretary has placed the project on the Department's priority one list to receive the federal share of funding at \$7.8 million.

During consideration of the House-passed version of H.R. 2116 in September, I voiced my concerns that the bill would delay the Georgetown project for several years. Chairman STUMP, Chairman STEARNS and ranking members EVANS and GUTIERREZ agree that it is important to move ahead with the project, and they worked with the Senate to include language that will have the effect of placing the Georgetown facility first on the list for federal funding in FY 2001. While I would prefer that the project be funded in FY 2000, I do want to thank the Chairmen, the ranking members and the Senate for listening to the concerns of the veterans in Ohio and seeing that this project remains a priority. I will continue to work with them, Secretary West as well as state and local officials in Ohio to ensure that the Georgetown facility becomes a reality without any further delay.

STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR of Georgia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the

House suspend the rules and agree to the conference report on the bill, H.R. 2116.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LEIF ERICSON MILLENNIUM COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3373) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in conjunction with the minting of coins by the Republic of Iceland in commemoration of the millennium of the discovery of the New World by Leif Ericson.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3373

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE I—LEIF ERICSON MILLENNIUM COMMEMORATIVE COIN

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Leif Ericson Millennium Commemorative Coin Act".

SEC. 102. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) \$1 SILVER COINS.—In conjunction with the simultaneous minting and issuance of commemorative coins by the Republic of Iceland in commemoration of the millennium of the discovery of the New World by Leif Ericson, the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this title referred to as the "Secretary") shall mint and issue not more than 500,000 1 dollar coins, which shall—

- (1) weigh 26.73 grams;
- (2) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and
- (3) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this title shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this title shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 103. SOURCES OF BULLION.

The Secretary may obtain silver for minting coins under this title from any available source, including stockpiles established under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act.

SEC. 104. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The design of the coins minted under this title shall be emblematic of the millennium of the discovery of the New World by Leif Ericson.

(2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this title there shall be—

- (A) a designation of the value of the coin;
- (B) an inscription of the year "2000"; and
- (C) inscriptions of the words "Liberty", "In God We Trust", "United States of America", and "E Pluribus Unum".

(b) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this title shall be—

- (1) selected by the Secretary after consultation with the Leifur Eiriksson Foundation and the Commission of Fine Arts; and
- (2) reviewed by the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee.

SEC. 105. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this title shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) MINT FACILITY.—Only one facility of the United States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality of the coins minted under this title.

(c) COMMENCEMENT OF ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this title beginning January 1, 2000.

(d) TERMINATION OF MINTING AUTHORITY.—No coins may be minted under this title after December 31, 2000.

SEC. 106. SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins minted under this title shall include a surcharge of \$10 per coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—All surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this title shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to the Leifur Eiriksson Foundation for the purpose of funding student exchanges between students of the United States and students of Iceland.

(c) AUDITS.—The Leifur Eiriksson Foundation shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts received by the Foundation under subsection (b).

SEC. 107. GENERAL WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), no provision of law governing procurement or public contracts shall be applicable to the procurement of goods and services necessary for carrying out the provisions of this title.

(b) EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY.—Subsection (a) shall not relieve any person entering into a contract under the authority of this title from complying with any law relating to equal employment opportunity.

TITLE II—CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER COMMEMORATIVE COIN

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “United States Capitol Visitor Center Commemorative Coin Act of 1999”.

SEC. 202. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Congress moved to Washington, District of Columbia, and first convened in the Capitol building in the year 1800;

(2) the Capitol building is now the greatest visible symbol of representative democracy in the world;

(3) the Capitol building has approximately 5,000,000 visitors annually and suffers from a lack of facilities necessary to properly serve them;

(4) the Capitol building and persons within the Capitol have been provided with excellent security through the dedication and sacrifice of the United States Capitol Police;

(5) Congress has appropriated \$100,000,000, to be supplemented with private funds, to construct a Capitol Visitor Center to provide continued high security for the Capitol and enhance the educational experience of visitors to the Capitol;

(6) Congress would like to offer the opportunity for all persons to voluntarily participate in raising funds for the Capitol Visitor Center; and

(7) it is appropriate to authorize coins commemorating the first convening of the Congress in the Capitol building with proceeds from the sale of the coins, less expenses, being deposited for the United States Capitol Preservation Commission with the specific purpose of aiding in the construction, maintenance, and preservation of a Capitol Visitor Center.

SEC. 203. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this title referred to as the “Secretary”) shall mint and issue the following coins under this title:

(1) BIMETALLIC COINS.—Not more than 200,000 \$10 bimetallic coins of gold and platinum, in accordance with such specifications as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(2) \$1 SILVER COINS.—Not more than 500,000 \$1 coins, which shall—

(A) weigh 26.73 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(C) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(3) HALF DOLLAR.—Not more than 750,000 half dollar clad coins, each of which—

(A) shall weigh 11.34 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 1.205 inches; and

(C) be minted to the specifications for half dollar coins contained in section 5112(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) \$5 GOLD COINS.—If the Secretary determines that the minting and issuance of bimetallic coins under subsection (a)(1) is not feasible, the Secretary may mint and issue instead not more than 100,000 \$5 coins, which shall—

(1) weigh 8.359 grams;

(2) have a diameter of 0.850 inches; and

(3) contain 90 percent gold and 10 percent alloy.

(c) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this title shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 204. SOURCES OF BULLION.

(a) PLATINUM AND GOLD.—The Secretary shall obtain platinum and gold for minting coins under this title from available sources.

(b) SILVER.—The Secretary may obtain silver for minting coins under this title from stockpiles established under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act, and from other available sources.

SEC. 205. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The design of the coins minted under this title shall be emblematic of the first meeting of the United States Congress in the United States Capitol Building.

(2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this title, there shall be—

(A) a designation of the value of the coin;

(B) an inscription of the year “2001”; and

(C) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”, “In God We Trust”, “United States of America”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

(b) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this title shall be—

(1) selected by the Secretary, after consultation with the United States Capitol Preservation Commission (in this title referred to as the “Commission”) and the Commission of Fine Arts; and

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee.

SEC. 206. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this title shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) MINT FACILITY.—Only 1 facility of the United States Mint may be used to strike any particular combination of denomination and quality of the coins minted under this title.

(c) FIRST USE OF YEAR 2001 DATE.—The coins minted under this title shall be the first commemorative coins of the United States to be issued bearing the inscription of the year “2001”.

(d) PROMOTION CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the Commission in order to establish a role for the Commission or an entity designated by the Commission in the promotion, advertising, and marketing of the coins minted under this title; and

(2) if the Secretary determines that such action would be beneficial to the sale of

coins minted under this title, enter into a contract with the Commission or an entity referred to in paragraph (1) to carry out the role established under paragraph (1).

SEC. 207. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins minted under this title shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of—

(1) the face value of the coins;

(2) the surcharge provided in subsection (d) with respect to such coins; and

(3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this title at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this title before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

(d) SURCHARGES.—All sales under this title shall include a surcharge established by the Secretary, in an amount equal to not more than—

(1) \$50 per coin for the \$10 coin or \$35 per coin for the \$5 coin;

(2) \$10 per coin for the \$1 coin; and

(3) \$3 per coin for the half dollar coin.

SEC. 208. DISTRIBUTION OF SURCHARGES.

All surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins minted under this title shall be deposited in the Capitol Preservation Fund in accordance with section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, and shall be made available to the Commission for the purpose of aiding in the construction, maintenance, and preservation of a Capitol Visitor Center.

TITLE III—LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION COMMEMORATIVE COIN

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act”.

SEC. 302. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) the expedition commanded by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, which came to be called “The Corps of Discovery”, was one of the most remarkable and productive scientific and military exploring expeditions in all American history;

(2) President Thomas Jefferson gave Lewis and Clark the mission to “explore the Missouri River & such principal stream of it, as, by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or any other river may offer the most direct and practical water communication across this continent for the purposes of commerce”;

(3) the Expedition, in response to President Jefferson’s directive, greatly advanced our geographical knowledge of the continent and prepared the way for the extension of the American fur trade with American Indian tribes throughout the land;

(4) President Jefferson directed the explorers to take note of and carefully record the natural resources of the newly acquired territory known as Louisiana, as well as diligently report on the native inhabitants of the land;

(5) the Expedition departed St. Louis, Missouri on May 14, 1804;

(6) the Expedition held its first meeting with American Indians at Council Bluff near present-day Fort Calhoun, Nebraska, in August 1804, spent its first winter at Fort Mandan, North Dakota, crossed the Rocky

Mountains by the mouth of the Columbia River in mid-November of that year, and wintered at Fort Clatsop, near the present-day city of Astoria, Oregon;

(7) the Expedition returned to St. Louis, Missouri, on September 23, 1806, after a 28-month journey covering 8,000 miles during which it traversed 11 future States: Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon;

(8) accounts from the journals of Lewis and Clark and the detailed maps that were prepared by the Expedition enhance knowledge of the western continent and routes for commerce;

(9) the Expedition significantly enhanced amicable relationships between the United States and the autonomous American Indian nations, and the friendship and respect fostered between American Indian tribes and the Expedition represents the best of diplomacy and relationships between divergent nations and cultures; and

(10) the Lewis and Clark Expedition has been called the most perfect expedition of its kind in the history of the world and paved the way for the United States to become a great world power.

SEC. 303. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATION.—In commemoration of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this title referred to as the "Secretary") shall mint and issue not more than 500,000 \$1 coins, each of which shall—

- (1) weigh 26.73 grams;
- (2) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and
- (3) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this title shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this title shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 304. SOURCES OF BULLION.

The Secretary may obtain silver for minting coins under this title from any available source, including stockpiles established under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act.

SEC. 305. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The design of the coins minted under this title shall be emblematic of the expedition of Lewis and Clark.

(2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this title there shall be—

- (A) a designation of the value of the coin;
- (B) an inscription of the year "2004" and the years "1804-1806"; and
- (C) inscriptions of the words "Liberty", "In God We Trust", "United States of America", and "E Pluribus Unum".

(3) OVERSE OF COIN.—The obverse of each coin minted under this title shall bear the likeness of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

(4) GENERAL DESIGN.—In designing this coin, the Secretary shall also consider incorporating appropriate elements from the Jefferson Peace and Friendship Medal which Lewis and Clark presented to the Chiefs of the various Indian tribes they encountered and shall consider recognizing Native American culture.

(b) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this title shall be selected by the Secretary after consultation with the Commission of Fine Arts and shall be reviewed by the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee.

SEC. 306. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this title shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) MINT FACILITY.—Only one facility of the United States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality of the coins minted under this title.

(c) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this title only during the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on December 31, 2004.

SEC. 307. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this title shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of—

- (1) the face value of the coins;
- (2) the surcharge provided in subsection (d) with respect to such coins; and
- (3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this title at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this title before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

(d) SURCHARGES.—All sales of coins minted under this title shall include a surcharge of \$10 per coin.

SEC. 308. DISTRIBUTION OF SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, the proceeds from the surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this title shall be promptly paid by the Secretary as follows:

(1) NATIONAL LEWIS AND CLARK BICENTENNIAL COUNCIL.—Two-thirds to the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council, for activities associated with commemorating the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

(2) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.—One-third to the National Park Service for activities associated with commemorating the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

(b) AUDITS.—Each organization that receives any payment from the Secretary under this section shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 309. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.

(a) NO NET COST TO THE GOVERNMENT.—The Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that minting and issuing coins under this title will not result in any net cost to the United States Government.

(b) PAYMENT FOR COINS.—A coin shall not be issued under this title unless the Secretary has received—

- (1) full payment for the coin;
- (2) security satisfactory to the Secretary to indemnify the United States for full payment; or
- (3) a guarantee of full payment satisfactory to the Secretary from a depository institution whose deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Administration Board.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH).

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3373, a bill that will, among other things, implement a unique program to issue a millennium commemorative dollar coin.

The bill would permit the simultaneous issuance of a U.S. silver dollar and a silver 1000 Kronor Icelandic coin, both produced by the United States Mint and both celebrating the 1000-year anniversary of Leif Ericson's voyage to the New World. Both of these coins would be produced in limited mintages. This will be a significant numismatic event, a 1000-year anniversary, the two countries jointly issuing coins commemorating the same event, and a limited boxed edition of both coins issued by the Mint.

Interestingly, the Icelandic coin will depict Leif Ericson as he appears in a statue that stands today in Reykjavik. The statue of the great explorer was created by the sculptor Stirling Calder, father of Alexander Calder, and was presented by the United States Congress to the parliament of Iceland, known as the Althing, on its 1000th anniversary in 1930.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to create two other coins commemorating significant events. One, an initiative of the bipartisan leadership in both the House and the Senate, would be the first commemorative coin dated 2001 and would mark the 200th anniversary of the United States Capitol building in which we now stand. Proceeds would be used to help build a Capitol Visitors Center.

Also authorized in this bill is a coin dated 2004 to commemorate the bicentennial of the start of another epic discovery expedition, this one the 8,000-mile trek by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, with the backing of President Thomas Jefferson, through land that is now part of the States of Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) has been a tireless and persuasive sponsor of this initiative.

As my colleagues may recall, similar versions of the Leif Ericson and Lewis and Clark bills passed this chamber under suspension in both this and the last Congress, and the Congressional Budget Office has scored all the coins as budget neutral.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation for the thoughtful judgment and advice of the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE), my good friend, on this and so many other issues before the committee. I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. LAFALCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill, H.R. 3373, which authorizes the minting and issuance of

three commemorative coins. Earlier in this session, the House passed under suspension of the rules both the Lewis and Clark commemorative coin to be minted in the year 2004 and the Leif Ericson commemorative coin to be minted next year, the start of the new millennium. The latter coin will be minted in conjunction with the Republic of Iceland, which will simultaneously mint and issue a coin to commemorate the millennium of Leif Ericson's arrival in the New World, a watershed event in the history of our continent. The third coin will commemorate the Capitol Visitors Center, for which Congress has already appropriated \$100 million that will be supplemented by private funds.

All three coins are supported by the Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee, the U.S. Mint, and fall within the parameters of the Commemorative Coin Reform Act of 1996, which restricts the minting of commemorative coins to not more than two per calendar year.

All coins also pay for themselves and generate proceeds that are devoted to important activities. For instance, the minting and issuance of the Lewis and Clark commemorative coin will be done at no cost to the American taxpayer, and proceeds from its sale will accrue to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council and the National Park Service. Both of these organizations are currently preparing for the bicentennial celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Similarly, proceeds from the sale of the Leif Ericson coin will go to the Leifur Eiriksson Foundation for the purpose of funding student exchanges between the United States and Iceland. And, lastly, proceeds from the Capitol Visitors Center coin will accrue to the Capitol Preservation Commission for the purpose of aiding the construction, maintenance, and preservation of a Capitol Visitors Center.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a co-chair of the Friends of Norway Caucus and would like to recognize the contributions of Leif Ericson as the original European to set foot in the North American continent and the establishment of permanent settlements by Scandinavian or Icelandic explorers a thousand years ago.

I know that all of us have grown up learning about Christopher Columbus and what he did with his explorations

and the so-called "founding" of the New World. But all of us also know that the indigenous residents of this continent had been here for thousands of years before, so it is somewhat of an insult to say that the Europeans "discovered" this continent because it had been discovered for centuries and inhabited.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that there are these various hardy souls that ventured forth from Europe looking for new land, new territory to settle, riches, extending the religious beliefs that they held so dearly. It is also interesting to note that as we approach the year 2000, it is a thousand years since Leif Ericson set foot in what is now thought to be Newfoundland.

It is also interesting to note that these Scandinavian settlers in the Western Hemisphere actually established farmsteads and it is estimated there were as many as 400 of them in Greenland and that these settlements endured for several centuries. In fact, longer than many of the regions of the United States have been settled. So, indeed, European peoples were on the North American continent and established settlements for centuries before our beloved Christopher Columbus actually set foot here.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the bill that has been introduced by my colleagues and the recognition of Leif Ericson's exploits.

□ 1800

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I have no speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR of Georgia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3373.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 374 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 374

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on or before the legislative day of Wednesday, November 17, 1999, for the Speaker to entertain motions to suspend the rules, provided that the object of any such motion is announced from the floor at least one hour before the motion is offered. In scheduling the consideration of legislation under this authority, the Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or his designee.

SEC. 2. Provides that House Resolution 342 is laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from South Boston, Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY); pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 374 provides for consideration of motions to suspend the rules at any time up to and including the legislative day of Wednesday, November 17. It requires the Speaker to consult with the minority leader on the designation of any matter for consideration under suspension of the rules. Finally, it provides that the subject of any motion to suspend the rules be announced from the floor at least 1 hour prior to its consideration.

Under clause 1 of rule XV of the rules of the House, the Speaker may only entertain motions to suspend the rules on Mondays, Tuesdays, and the last 6 days of a session. Since the House has not yet passed an adjournment resolution, the last 6 days of this session, we hope we are in the midst of them, it has not yet been determined. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is necessary for us to pass this resolution in order to allow the House to consider suspensions tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, we have nearly completed our business for the first session of the 106th Congress. To tie up the remaining loose ends and prepare to return to our districts, it is imperative to allow ourselves the utmost flexibility in scheduling and considering the few noncontroversial, yet very important, items of business that remain before us.

The resolution is just an extension of the resolution that we passed here in the House on November 3. It is simple, straightforward, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), my dear friend, for yielding me the customary half hour.

Mr. Speaker, here we are again considering a rule making every day a suspension day. Under this rule, the Republican leadership can bypass all the House rules and schedule bills at last minute with only 1 hour's notice.

Two weeks ago when we did the identical rule, I asked my Republican colleagues on the Committee on Rules to give us a 2-hour notice, and they so graciously agreed. Last week, something changed.

Last week, I asked my Republican colleagues for 2 hours' notice; instead,